Memorial Sermon;

PREACHED IN THE

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

OSHKOSH, WISCONSIN,

SABBATH MORNING, JULY, 30, 1876.

BY THE PASTOR:

REV. J. H. NIBLOCK,

Being the Eleventh Anniversary of His Pastorate.

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PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR.

The within Discourse was not originally designed for publication, but at the suggestion of friends in the Church, and in the belief that it embraced certain facts of church history, worthy to be recorded and liable to be forgotten, it is deemed proper to give it to the public in a printed form. Several items of interest have been added, since the sermon was preached. As a record of the Divine Goodness and with the hope and prayer that a blessing may attend its publication, the author sends it forth.

Oshkosh, Wisconsin, August 7th, 1876.

MEMORIAL SERMON.

"*Fear not, little flock, for it is Your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*"

The lessons of this chapter are of the most vital and practical character. In special, the Saviour teaches and illustrates the evil and danger of covetousness by the parable of the rich man. After all his accumulations of wealth and property, pulling down his barns and building greater, and flattering his soul, with the pleasing pictures of the Future; he learns, alas! when too late, to repair the folly, that he has acted the fool. Death steps in and nips in the bud all his fair calculations.

The Human and Divine Judgments are here sharply contrasted. This man plumes himself on his practical wisdom and foresight. Much goods and many years is his idea; but God says, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he, says Jesus, "*that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich towards God.*"

The Great Teacher urges on men to fulfill a nobler mission, than merely to acquire and enjoy the things of the world—these all perish with the using of them. To the question, What is true wisdom? He gives the true answer: "Rather seek ye the kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you." Here was a higher motive and richer treasurer than this world could furnish. God might withhold or grant earthly blessings. These were not the great essentials of life; not even of the present, to say nothing of the future life. To his disciples then, the Saviour holds out this leading hope and inspiraton; a Kingdom was prepared for them, of heavenly glory and felicity, and hence better than any earthly kingdom possibly could be, and not more surely provided and promised than it would be given to his people. This world was but the passage way to the kingdom, and hence they were not to fear but "safe at last all danger past" they would enter upon its full life and glory. *This is the lesson, the inspiration*, the assurance of the text "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure, to give you the kingdom."—The emblem or figure of the text is simple, appropriate and beautiful.

The disciples of Jesus, in comparison with the vast multitudes of the world, are but a little an. feeble flock, but they have a Good Shepherd to look after them. The Good Shepherd even gives his life for his sheep, and the Lord Jesus has given this pledge of his heart's love.

They are his flock purchased with his own blood.

To provide for the flock, keep them safe and bring them into the fold, is the prerogative alike of the earthly shepherd and also the spiritual shepherd of Israel, who issues in the text his proclamatio n of counsel, comfort and intention. "Fear not, little flock, &c." I propose this thought as a topic and basis for a Memorial Discourse, viz:

The will of Christ, as to the good and safety of his people, giving them promise, both of "The life that now is and that which is to come."

In all Christian history, this divine promise has been a tower of comfort and strength to the church, and no less to-day than in the past can we lift our eyes to this summit of Gospel promise and rejoice for the courage and consolation it may well inspire afresh in our hearts.

What christian or church is there, but has a certain allotment of troubles, trials and enemies? Paul speaks in his time of such a state of things. This is how he puts it: "Troubled on every side, having fightings without and also fears within." A sad, but by no means an unusual history.

Satan and his company and interests are in direct and irrepressible conflict with Christ and his people and their gospel and benevolent work, and hence the entire Satanic opposition may be expected and must be encountered. Not less than this, there is the natural heart in its deceitfulness and wickedness. And in the case of the christian, the dregs of remaining corruption are to be feared and guarded against. More and more the christian has need to be reminded of the weakness of self and the folly of trusting to human strength. "Without me, ye can do nothing," was the lesson taught the early christians and the same gospel truth has need to be realized now as then.

Amid the varied christian life and experience, enemies, doubts, darkness, weakness, discouragement, opposition, persecution, what a divine message of courage, gladness and strength is this, that comes to the christian heart, and comes in a way and from a source not to be mistaken. "Fear not, &c."

God in human and especially in church history is a theme worthy the pen and study of the student and philosopher. We recognize the Almighty by the footsteps of his Providence. The world is like a huge instrument and God's providences are but the touches of its strings, all vibrating his praise and wisdom. To the question, "How do you know there is a God?" asked of an Arab, in his native desert, he answered indignantly. "*How do I know there is a God?*" "How do I know whether a man or camel passed my tent last night?" The more carefully we scan the page of history, the more deeply the truth impresses us of the divine care and interference in behalf of the church and people of Christ. "Touch not mine anointed and do my prophets no harm," has been a prohibit, which the proudest Potentates have not dared to disrespect.

Christian safety has ever been the reward of christian loyalty. Thus we remark this invariable truth, that in so far as the church has been faithful to do and teach "all things that Christ has commanded, her life has been blessed and continued, but a contrary course of heresy and unfaithfulness to her profession has brought its legitimate and threatened punishment. Over how much of ancient greatness,

spiritual as well as natural, is written Ichabod, "the Glory has departed."

Thus, may we profit by the past and also estimate the character and strength of our christian love and loyalty. These will be measured by our obedience, our efforts and disposition to honor our master, by doing his will, and in just proportion to this loyalty can we estimate and appropriate the meaning and comfort of our text.

But not so much to history in general as to our particular history as a church and congregation, is it my purpose to call attention this morning. By order of a recent General Assembly, in concert with the different Presbyterian bodies, all the congregations of the U. P. church were directed to have histories prepared of their organization and these, either printed or written on uniform paper, to be forwarded to the Presbyterian Historical Rooms at Philadelphia for safe keeping, by the first of July.

This Memorial Discourse I have deferred until this last Sabbath of July, being, as you are aware, the Eleventh anniversary of my Pastorate in this church. Enlarging on the plan of previous years, to recall the history of the year just passed, I propose in this discourse, to give a brief outline of our church from the beginning.

While this may be a familiar story to some in my audience, who have been with us from the first, to others who have since joined our ranks this history will be a matter both of interest and information.

I invite your attention then, to this not very lengthened chapter of our church history.

Let me premise by accounting for the existence of a United Presbyterian church in this city, and for many years after its organization the only Presbyterian church within a radius of ten to twenty miles of Oshkosh. About the year 1858, several families connected with the U. P. church in Washington county, N. Y., moved to this city, and to their *practical* desire, to have a church and worship of their own order, is due the fact of our present existence.

A mission station, known as the Murray Settlement near Neenah, and 12 miles north of Oshkosh, was organized about the year 1857, with 19 members, by Rev. Samuel Collins, then settled at Yorkville, Wis., but for many years previous the station was visited by ministers of the associate Presbyterian church, as far back perhaps as 1847–1848. Among the names I have been able to gather are Revs. Story, Collins, Hanna, Thompson, Hindman, McNeel, Kerr, Anderson, Nash, Murray, Grimes, Winter, McElhenny, Templeton and Raitt, who preached here at different times up to the year 1859. Hopes were entertained that a good congregation would here be built up, but these were dissipated by the death of Mr. David Murray Sr., and his wife in 1859. The memory of these excellent people is still fragrant in the hearts of many of our ministers of 20 and 25 years ago, and who still speak of them with admiration. On their way to this station and also to Waupaca, several of these preachers called at Oshkosh, and improved the opportunity to preach to the little U. P. flock. Among these I can name Revs. Grimes, Winter and Raitt. Also previous to 1864, Rev. Brown. In 1864, Rev. J. M. Hutchinson, my personal friend and college class-mate, now Pastor of the Presbyterian church at Jeffersonville, Ind., was stated supply. At this time, the young mission, like the young city itself, was in a

hopeful and prosperous state. Services had been held ih Gill's Hall, on Main street, but by the courtesy of the Hook and Ladder Co., the use of their comfortable hall off High street, was obtained and was occupied by the congregation for several years, free of rent.

On application to the U. P. Presbytery of Chicago, Rev. W. T. Moffet was appointed to visit and organize the congregation, and on the 20th of May, 1864, he filled his appointment. Fourteen persons gave in their names for membership, viz: Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Campbell, Sr., David M. Campbell and Georgina T. Campbell, Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Bath, Miss Foyle, Miss Mason, Mrs. Bell, Mrs. Cameron, Mr. Sharpe, Mr. Thos. Strothers and wife, and Mrs. Sarah Johnston — all but one being received by letter from the church in the East. On the following day Wm. Campbell Sr. was elected by the people and set apart to the office of Ruling Elder, and so continues with us until this day.

On Sabbath, the day following, the Lord's supper was dispensed and the ordinance of Baptism administered to two children.

During the summer of the same year, Rev. J. A. Morrow, by appointment of the Board of Home Missions, began his labors as a misionary.

The second communion was held the last Sabbath of January, 1864, when eleven (11) additional members were received; five by examination and Profession, and six by Letter, viz: Mr. L. Kelly, Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, Mary and Elizabeth Edwards, Mr. and Mrs. Owens, Messrs. James Roberts, and Geo.H. Cameron, Misses Kate Roberts and Maggie Wallace. In the month of May following, Mr. Luke Kelly and Wm. Edwards were elected and ordained Ruling Elders. Mr. Kelly is now a resident of Omro, and Mr. Edwards several years ago moved to Illinois, and is now dead. Bro. Morrow continued his ministry until the month of June, when the term of his appointment expired. He was a faithful preacher and pastor, and is now settled in the congregations of Jeffersonville, and New Market, Steubenville Presbytery, Ohio.

At the meeting of the General Assembly in May of the same year the present pastor received his appointment to the U. P. mission at Oshkosh. His licensure had taken place the year previously, and he was then supplying in the Presbytery of Philadelphia. The appointment was most unexpected, and serious difficulties presented themselves in the way of its fulfillment. But after sundry misgivings, not uncommon to those who then regarded Wisconsin as quite on the "outskirts," he concluded to *accept the situation*, and reached the field the last week in July, and preached his first sermons in Oshkosh, in the Hook and Ladder Hall, the last Sabbath of July, 1865, just eleven years ago to-day. I was then a stranger in a strange place, but I soon found myself among a sterling, warm-hearted people, and tne lengthy and varied experiences of these eleven years, have not served to overturn, either the opinions or friendships then formed.

Well do I remember the scenes and incidents of my first Sabbath in Oshkosh,—the place of meeting, the sermons and the congregation. The church decorations, in particular, seemed to me of a very unusual character. Behind the preacher's desk hung a large-sized portrait of Abraham Lincoln, while on either side the walls were hung with flaming pictures,—buildings wrapped in flames, and fire engines,

hose carts and like machines, hurrying to the fray. The lively personal experiences I have had in the several big fires, which have made Oshkosh so famous through the country in these years, have served to strengthen my dread of this terrible enemy, and also my appreciation of every improved method for fighting him effectively. The congregation, that day, was very respectable, both in numbers and appearance. The sermons were a lecture in the morning, on the parable of the *Two Sons*, and at 3 p. m. a sermon on "The Lord's Side." I had some thoughts of repeating these, to-day, but on looking them over I have concluded the task would be very difficult.

In the course of a few weeks and without my knowledge, application was made to the Presbytery of Wisconsin for the moderation of a call, which was granted, and a call signed by all the members present and also twenty adherents, was presented and accepted, and on the 12th of Oct. following I was ordained to the ministry, and installed pastor of this church by the Presbytery of Wisconsin. To me, it is a solemn thought that of those who signed the call and took my hand, at the conclusion of the installation service, seven have died, and of the others only 16 remain with us.

The following Sabbath our communion was held, Rev. Elliott assisting. Mrs. John Dean on profession of her faith and Mr. and Mrs. James Willock by letter, were received into membership, making 14 admitted in 1865.

A suitable church building was felt to be a necessity and active measures were at once taken to meet this want. In addition to liberal subscriptions at home, the Pastor, by a trip to Pennsylvania, secured valuable help, and in addition timely aid was given us by our Board of Church Extension. At the time and considering the weak state of the congregation, to build such a house was a large undertaking, but most liberally did the people respond to the calls on their Liberality. The building was completed and opened for public worship, December 16th, 1866.

The following extract is taken from the church register:

"It may be a matter of interest for future reference that on this Sabbath (Dec. 16, 1866,) our new church was formally opened and set apart for Divine worship; sermons, morning and evening, appropriate to the occasion were preached by Rev. W. C. Jackson, of Chicago. Also a history of the church and an appeal for help by the Pastor, after which a collection of $600 was taken in aid of the Building Fund. Thus with thankful hearts are we permitted this day to occupy our spiritual Temple and worship, in our holy place, the God of our Fathers. The anniversary of the Sabbath School was held in the afternoon. The school numbers about 60 scholars and is in a prosperous condition with Mr. Kelly as Superintendent."

With all the monies raised, the church was still in debt some $1800 (a mortgage of $1500 and notes for $300) on which no interest was ever charged by the holder, Mr. Wm. Campbell Sr. I mention but this one of the many generous acts of our venerable friend, who is well termed the father, as he was one of the leading founders of the congregation.

In 1866, eleven persons were received into membership, 6 by examination and 5 by Letter, viz: Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. Glyn, Mrs. Chase,

Miss Eliza Willock, Mrs. and Mrs. Hawthorne, Mr. J. C. Bull, Mr. and Mrs. McArthur, Mrs. Bennett and Mrs. Miller.

In 1867, nineteen members were received, 6 by Profession and 13 by Letter, viz: Mr. and Mrs. Clements, and Miss Sarah Clements, Mr. and Mrs. Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Rodgers, Dr. and Mrs. Ault, Messrs. Jas. D. Campbell, Louis Trexel, Samuel Patterson, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Johnston, Mrs. Allen, Misses Ellen and Tillie Thompson, Miss Nannie Yount and Mrs. David Jones.

In 1868, 21 members were received, 10 by Profession and 11 by Letter, viz: Miss Mary Thompson, Mrs. Celia Campbell, Mr. and Mrs. Hedges, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Campbell, Mrs. Swift, Mrs. Thompson, Mr. and Mrs. Richards, Messrs. McKinnon and Thompson, Miss Sophora Owens, Mr. and Mrs. McFettridge, Mr. and Mrs. Murray, Mr. and Mrs. Lang, and Mr. Geo. F. Wright.

In 1869, nine members were received; 6 by Profession and 3 by Letter, viz: Mrs. Daniel Libbey, Mr. and Mrs. Parsons, Mrs. Ruby, Mrs. Service, Mr. and Mrs. Calder, Mr. and Mrs. McDonald.

In 1870, seven members were received, 5 by Profession and 2 by Letter, viz: Mr. and Mrs. Wylie' Misses Lizzie Bell and Sarah Clements and Janet Smeillie, Mrs. McKeoun and Mrs. McDonald.

In 1871, seventeen members were received, 12 by Profession and 5 by Letter, viz: Miss Mary L. Pratt, Mr. and Mrs. Kinney, Miss and Mrs. McDonald, Messrs. Allan Stewart, John Adams, Benjamin Owens, Duncan McDonald, Misses Aimie Bell, Maggie Clements, Lizzie Service, Frank Adams, Jane Johnston, Ellen Tarrant. Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Simons. This year seems to have been the best and most prosperous in our entire history, as a church. In the early spring a precious revival season was enjoyed, in which a goodly number were added to the church, and better still, the zeal activity and liberality of the church itself were sensibly increased. During this year $642, outside the pastor's salary, were raised for missions, church improvements and expenses. The principal improvement was a stone foundation and basement under the church. Two years later, the basement was finished, and now affords a pleasant and convenient room for Sabbath school and church meetings. In the month of November of this year, Mr. James Clements was elected and ordained Ruling Elder, to take the place of Mr. Hawthorne, who in 1868, had been set apart to the office, but declined longer to serve.

In 1872, eight members were received, seven by Examination and one by Letter, viz: Messrs. Wm. Cameron, R. McFettridge, Peleg Simons, Misses Bessie and Maggie McDonald, Mrs. Patterson, Mrs. Keddell, Miss Maggie Hawthorne.

In 1873, three members were received on Examination, viz: Miss Eliza Anderson, Mrs. Wm. Keddell and Andrew Willock.

In 1874, four members were received, Mrs. Burns, Mrs. Neely, Mr. Joseph Sharpe andMiss Mary Keddell on Profession of their faith.

In 1875, four members were received: Miss Bell and Miss Christiansen, and Messrs. Thomas Love and David Clements; making a total for eleven years, since 1865 of 117 members received, 69 on examination and profession, and 48 by letter from other churches, or an average of over 10 for each year, 107 of these being received under

the present pastorate. Added to the original we have a total of 131 members received.

As we look over our congregation to-day the question presents itself, Where are these people whose names from year to year have been written in the church book? Here is the answer: Of the original 14, eleven are alive, and with a single exception are present to-day. Mr. William Sharpe is deceased and Mr. and Mrs. Strothers are living in Depere, Wis. Of the 117 received since the organization, 14 are dead and 40 have been dismissed to other churches. This leaves the number on our Church Roll 74—a few of these it is proper to say, by absence and neglect, have forfeited their claims to membership.

In the light of this history it is not difficult to see. why in one respect at least, our membership is not larger, numbering less than 3 years ago. However, we are not an exception to sister churches, some of which have experienced even more marked changes. The trouble with us is, we have been sending and dropping out more than we have been taking in. In the first 5 years of our history we were favored with emigration from the church in the East and Canada, which in these last years we have not enjoyed. In proof, from 1866 to '70 inclusive, we received 34 members by Letter, while since 1870, we have taken in only 6 by Letter, and for the last few years received no help from this direction.

In addition to this, in our home-work, we recognize the fact that our principles and usuages as a church, are unpalatable to large numbers, who clamor for the largest liberty — both in their beliefs and practices.

It is better and nobler to be right, than to be popular. If our case be the former we can well afford to get along with a smaller share of the latter. In the spirit of the noble motto of our U. P. church, "*The Truth of God* and *Forbearance in Love*" let us give ourselves more fully to the service of our Master. While maintaining our own profession, we have sought the friendship of sister churches and been glad to co operate with them, when it was either consitent or practicable. The changes in the other churches of this city, have been marked and frequent in these 11 years. This is *especially* true of the shepherds of the various flocks as well as the flocks themselves. Most of the churches have changed their pastors several times, and with the single exception of Rev. Mr. Haff, who after an absence of some years, recently returned to the people of his first love, no pastor, either Protestant or Catholic, in this city of 25 churches, remains, who was here when I came to Oshkosh.

I am glad to be able to deny in my own person and experience, the rumor that has obtained in certain quarters, that our beautiful city was by no means a beautiful place for the ministry. I can say with all candor that in my rather lengthened ministerial stay among the people, I have ever been treated with uniform courtesy and kindness. In many cases, causes beyond the control of the Christian people, have contributed to these frequent changes.

The ordinance of baptism has been administered to 6 adults and 61 children, and the pastor has officiated at about 40 marriages and 50 funerals. The latter, being for the most part outside the membership of the church. My record also shows over 900 lectures and sermons preached in this church, of most of which the manuscripts are in my

possession. Standing in the line of western emigration other churches of our order have far outstripped us in point of numbers. As to our life and prosperity in the future, it is for us largely to decide the question. If we believe that this church has still a Mission to accomplish, let us fall back more resolutely upon our own resources, and have faith that with the Divine blessing, we will be a still larger Agency for good, in this community. Let us show a disposition to help ourselves, and thus prove ourselves worthy of others' help when it is needed.

Let me refer briefly to our work in the Sabbath School. This is second in importance to no other. About 40 of our present membership, have come in from our Sabbath School, and yet in the clear light of its importance, many of our people are unemployed or indifferent in this great work. *The work of the church and the Sabbath School, is in fact one and the same*, but too often the parents and children, instead of being together in both, meet at the church door — the *one* going out and the other coming in. I can say for myself, that it is not the lack of plain talking, if not scolding, that the attendance and success of our school have not been larger. Parents have been urged to bring the children with them to the church, that thus they might be led and helped in the ways of early piety, and also by their place in the S. School as parents set a practical example to their children.

Our Sabbath School has severally been superintended by Mr. Luke Kelly, who eleven years ago, and for many successive terms, acceptably filled the position. Also Mr. S. E. Allen, Mr. A. Rodgers, the pastor of the church, and for the last 15 months Dr. Ault, have severally filled the position.

The pastor's place is pre-eminently in the Sabbath School. There I have always been, and always hope to be. In the light of its importance and necessity, should not every one recognize both duty and privilege to come in and take part with us in this work?

Similar thought applies to the Prayer Meeting — well termed as to attendance and interest — the spiritual thermometer of the church. While as to both these the attendance has sometimes been discouraging they have yet never been intermitted. I rejoice that in these eleven years while there have been occasional intermissions in our public worship, yet there has been no vacation in the Sabbath School or Prayer Meeting. Satan's school has no vacations, which renders it all the more important that the doors of Christ's school, should always be open. In general, the spiritual condition of the congregation, while perhaps no worse than sister churches around us, is yet far from being what it should. No true estimate can be made of the power and influence, of even a small company of christians, if only they are united, prayerful, consistent, and devoted. It is not mere position or wealth, as some seem to think, but personal character, that determines our Influence upon others. The world has a jealous and constant eye upon the church and it is both an injury and reproach to religion — while it is no apology for unbelief — that Christian life and conduct, are so inconsistent with christian profession. On the other hand, it seems even more inconsistent, in a large class, who would be a lantern to others, and yet are walking in the dark themselves. In the church Genuine Piety is the power behind the throne, and if this be weak or wanting, mere numbers or the name of Religion, will be of minor account. The work

to be done by the churches in this community, requires a spirit of christian courage, unity and devotion.

Our fight with the Rum Traffic is unceasing and uncompromising. An enemy of strong resources ; while we study his strength and tactics, we need not fear him. Only a practical union of our Christian and Temperance sentiment is needed to bring about a revolution in the thought and practice of the people. The same is true of our German Infidelism. It flaunts its colors and casts its filth in the path of our established christian customs and institutions. That Sunday theatres and dance houses, not to mention the open beer and tobacco shops, should be tolerated, in defiance of law and under the nose of our public authorities, is a disgrace to a professed Christian community. If the christian sentiment among the people had the courage to assert itself, the worship and quiet of the holy Sabbath would not be invaded. These unhallowed places would close their doors, and not a dog would dare to wag his tongue.

In common with other churches, we greatly need to be revived. We need a fresh and full Baptism of the Spirit, to stir us up and engage us more heartily in christian and gospel work. We need to rid Satan from our hearts, the Satan of Self, Jealousy, Pride, Covetousness, Hatred and Suspicion, wherever existing. This cast out and trodden under foot, we can in that case give ourselves more fully to Christ, and be increasingly honored in helping forward the great cause of Religion, Humanity and Truth.

A word or two about our financial condition as a congregation. I am glad to say, that with the exception of a small balance due on salary, the church bills are all settled, and while some of our sister churches are troubled with debt and incumbrances on their property, ours is free. I am credited — and I hope it is true — with looking at the sun rather than the clouds; but looking out to-day over our field and work, along with much to dishearten, there are also many reasons for encouragement and thankfulness. What is needed on the part of all, is an honest and liberal purpose, and in the fear of God, to endeavor to do our whole duty.

Between the pastor and eldership of this church, I am glad to say the most cordial relations exist. Our prayers and efforts have been joined hitherto for the spiritual good and safety of this little flock, that under the blessing of the chief Shepherd, we might help forward the old and young, the fathers, mothers and children, up to the Kingdom, which he declares it to be his pleasure to give, to every true member of his spiritual flock. The same is true of the trustees of the church,— the present officers, and also their predecessors. In our business relations, there has been no interruption of kindly feeling and co-operation. Very often the work of these men is thankless as it is difficult, and too often, and unreasonably, they are expected somehow to accomplish the task of "making bricks without straw." The moral of the business is, that if our trustees are to pay the bills and manage the finances of the church, the people have their part to do in furnishing them the *ready wherewith.* On a very limited capital, the financial business of the church has been wisely and carefully managed. While a too rigid economy is not to be approved, it is well to seek to have "the clothes cut according to the cloth."

I cannot close these memorials without expressing my hearty

acknowledgements to the women of the church. They have been true Aarons and Hurs, in every church enterprise and emergency. Indeed, without their constant and efficient help, I fear our little boat long ere this, would have suffered founder. By means of their Missionary society, organized over two years ago, over $100 have been raised for the mission funds, thus doing in itself a noble work, and also keeping the way clear, for us getting needed help from the Board of Home Missions. Both in attending and conducting the services of the prayer meeting and Sabbath School, and in every good work, these christian sisters have been a *right arm.*

It is also justly due to acknowledge the generous help we have received in these years, from our Board of Home Missions. The only congregation of the U. P. church, now in this section of the state, amid our struggles and difficulties this board has showed us a practical sympathy and a disposition to see the cause maintained.

So far as I am aware, there exist to-day the kindest feelings and relations between the pastor and people of this church, and I believe the same is true generally, in the community, among whom it has been my privilege so long to have a home. It was a sense of this feeling of general and warm friendship, that made the prospect a few weeks ago of a separation of these happy relations, peculiarly painful. So that I can hardly say to-day, whether I am glad or sorry, that our plans for leaving this field, are for the present, at least, likely broken up.

In entering on the twelfth year of my pastoral work among you, I most earnestly invoke the continued help, sympathies and prayers, of all the people. For my faults and weaknesses, as in the past, so in the future I ask a generous and christian charity. The continual changes and separations around us, enforce the lessons of Kindness, Friendship and Good-Will, both among ourselves, and also them that are without, and the desirableness of such a state of things.

In the course of the past year, this church and entire community, sustained a grievous loss in the death of our lamented brother, David Hawthorne. A steadfast christian, a useful citizen, an affectionate husband and father, the loss of such a man, is in every human sense, a calamity. But knowing him as we do, we can rejoice in the assurance and consolation, that our loss is his gain, and that he has entered on his reward. "Let us also be ready, for in such an hour as we think not, the Son of Man cometh."

While to-day as a church, we are among the weakest of the spiritual tribes, limited in our means, influence and resources, let us seek however humble, to fulfil a mission of good, aspiring to the commendation, "They have done what they could" Let us bear in mind that the battle is not always to the strong, but rather to the active, brave, and vigilant. With all his vaunted strength and armor and boasting, the spiritual David, with his sling and stone, is more than a match for great Goliath. The unfailing source of spiritual comfort and strength may well sustain us, amid the trials and dangers of the heavenward way. With hearts of love and confidence we may well respond to the Savior's message of grace, assurance and peace, while we wait for the full vision of the Hereafter. "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure, to give you the Kingdom."